

WULFSTAN OF WINCHESTER

Also known as Wulfstan Cantor, Wulfstan of Winchester was precentor at the Old Minster, Winchester, in the late 10th century. A former student of Bishop Æthelwold, he was responsible for the translation of Æthelwold's remains and for the development of the Saint's cult (Lapidge 1988 pp 110-117). Wulfstan's best known work is his prose *Life of St Æthelwold* (see below) but he also achieved a high degree of proficiency in Latin metrics and was the author of two lengthy poems, *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno* and *Breviloquium de omnibus sanctis* (on the recent identification of the latter poem as Wulfstan's work, see below). A number of liturgical works including hymns, collects etc., mostly connected with the cult of St Æthelwold, were also probably, though not certainly, written by him. These texts, and the arguments for regarding them as Wulfstan's, are discussed by Lapidge and Winterbottom (1991 pp xxiii-xxxix). See also Gneuss (GR 6248 pp 117-18, 246-48), Dronke, Lapidge and Stotz (1982 pp 60-62), and Dolbeau (1988 pp 58-59). For additional discussion of Wulfstan's probable authorship of the Æthelwold tropes in MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 473 see Planchart (1977 I pp 27-31).

In addition to his literary activity, Wulfstan was a skilled musician (Berry 1988 pp 155-60), and he is believed to have composed many of the organa in the Winchester repertoire (Holschneider 1968 pp 76-81; Planchart 1977 I pp 53-54). He wrote a treatise on music, *Breuiiloquium super musicam*, which has not, so far as is known, survived. We know of its existence because of a reference by William of Malmesbury (Stubbs 1887-89 I pp 166-67), from whom the alternative title, *De tonorum harmonia*, derives. The treatise is also cited by the anonymous author of a commentary on Boethius' *De musica*, who includes two quotations from Wulfstan's text and gives its title as *Breuiiloquium super musicam*. This commentary is preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 77 and Oxford, All Souls College, 90, both dating from the 15th century (White 1981 p 186; Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991 pp xvi-xvii). Planchart identifies Wulfstan as probably both the notator and the careful Scribe II of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 473, one of the Winchester Tropers (1977 I pp 19-33).

Vita S. Æthelwoldi [WVLF.WINT.Vit Æthelwold.]: *BHL* 2647; *PL* 137.

MSS none

Lists Peterborough ? : ML XIII.39. ?

A-S vers - Quots/Cits none

Refs Byrhtferth of Ramsey, Vita S. Oswaldi (iii.11)?

Although no MS survives from before the 12th century, this work was widely distributed and used by later writers. It was long believed to postdate, and to be based on, the *VITA S. ÆTHELWOLDI* by ÆLFRIC OF EYNHAM (e.g. Gransden 1974 p 78; *EHD* p 903). However, the arguments put forward by Fisher (1952 pp 388-91) and, more recently, by Lapidge (summarized in Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991 pp cxlvi-clv) that it was in fact the source of the latter work seem conclusive and likely to be accepted (Yorke 1988 pp 1-2). Wulfstan's *Vita* follows contemporary hagiographic conventions but does show some originality, particularly in its care over the chronology of Æthelwold's life and those events of which Wulfstan would have had personal knowledge (Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991 pp cv-cviii). Its style, though more ornate than that of Ælfric's *Vita*, is relatively restrained and Lapidge and Winterbottom place Wulfstan among the best authors of the late Old English period (1991 p cxi). Lapidge and Winterbottom give a full discussion of Wulfstan's sources (1991 pp ci-cxi) and the influence of his *Vita* (1991 pp cxliii-clxvii), showing that within the OE period, besides its use by Ælfric, it provided a source for Wulfstan himself (*Narratio metrica*, see below), for the author of the 'Dies sacra, dies illa' sequence in the two Winchester Tropers (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 473; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 775), and almost certainly for GOSCELIN OF SAINT-BERTIN in his *VITA S. WULFHILDE*. There is a reference in BYRHTFERTH OF RAMSEY'S *VITA. S. OSWALDI* to a description of the deeds of Æthelwold. The work referred to cannot, for reasons of dating, be Ælfric's *Vita* and, as we know of no other Life of Æthelwold, seems therefore to be Wulfstan's (Fisher 1952 pp 388-389; Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991 pp clxv-clxvi).

J. Mabillon included an edition of Orderic Vitalis' redaction of Wulfstan's text in his *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti* (1668-1701, 5. pp 606-24; 1733-40, 5. pp 596-612). This was reprinted by Migne (PL 137 pp 81-104). Michael Winterbottom included an edition based on London, BL, Cotton Tiberius D.iv in his *Three Lives of English Saints* (1972a). His more recent collaboration with Michael Lapidge has resulted in a comprehensive critical edition (Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991), which is based on all five MSS and is supplied with both a facing modern English translation and a very full and informative introduction. This is likely to become the standard edition. There is another modern English translation by D. Brearley and M. Goodfellow (1982 pp 377-407). For further critical discussion see Fisher (1952) and Winterbottom (1972 b).

Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno [WVLF.WINT.Narr.metr.Swith.]: *BHL* 7947; *ICL* 3896, 7958.

MSS 1. London, BL, Royal 15.C.vii: HG 496

Spectr-It

This poem is not in
Lapidge's List. I have
found all but one of
the abbrev. given here
in his list. The
exception is 'omn.'
where I have followed
his practice of giving
the word stem minus
inflectional ending

= Breviloquium

2. Oxford, Bodleian, Auctarium F. 2. 14: HG 535

Lists - Refs none

This, the longest and arguably the most metrically skilled of the surviving Anglo-Latin poems, is a version of the prose *TRANSLATIO ET MIRACULA S. SWITHUNI* by LANTFRED OF WINCHESTER. Lapidge and Winterbottom present the evidence for Wulfstan's authorship (1991 pp xxi-xxii) and date the composition of the poem to the years between 992 and 994, suggesting that it was revised around 996, after the composition of Wulfstan's *Vita S. Æthelwoldi*, when two chapters of the latter work were adapted and included in this one (1991 p xxii). The poem, comprising a total of over three thousand hexametrical lines, includes a dedicatory letter addressed to Ælfheah (Bishop of Winchester, 984-1005). Wulfstan displays considerable learning, echoing a variety of classical and medieval sources (see the notes to Campbell's edition). Dolbeau (1988 pp 42-44) finds echoes of the *Narratio* in the *Breuiiloquium de omnibus sanctis* (see below), which suggests that Wulfstan himself used the former as a source for the latter poem.

Earlier editions by M. Huber (1906) and A. Campbell (1950 pp 65-177) will, no doubt, be superseded by that in M. Lapidge, *The Cult of St Swithun*, forthcoming from the Oxford University Press.

Breuiiloquium de omnibus sanctis [WVLF.WINT.Breu.omn.sanct.]

MSS - Refs none

This poem, uniquely preserved in Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale II. 984, was only recently identified as being the work of Wulfstan (Dolbeau 1988). The identification, supported by internal evidence, and based on an acrostic in the verse prologue which spells the name VVLFSTANUS, is accepted by Lapidge and Winterbottom (1991 pp xviii-xx) and seems unlikely to be seriously challenged. The poem, comprising 669 hexameters, along with a 20 line prologue of epanaleptic couplets and a 27 hexameter epilogue, is a metrical version of the anonymous sermon for All Saints beginning *Legimus in ecclesiasticis historis* (ed. Cross 1977). Dolbeau argues that the *Breuiiloquium* is later than the *Narratio* which it uses as a source, and proposes a date sometime after 994-996 for the former poem (1988 p 44). He further suggests that the *Breuiiloquium* may have been written as a school text (1988 pp 48-49) and that the Brussels MS, which dates from the 11th century, was copied from an original taken to the continent by a traveller or a post-Conquest exile from Winchester (1988 p 60).

The only edition of the poem to have appeared so far is the one in Dolbeau's article and the only discussion, apart from that in the same article, is in the introduction to Lapidge and Winterbottom's edition of the *Vita S. Æthelwoldi* (1991 pp xvii-xx).

Elizabeth Jackson

Bibliography

- Berry, Mary. 'What the Saxon Monks Sang: Music in Winchester in the Late Tenth Century', in Yorke, 1988, pp. 149-160
- Brearley, D and M. Goodfellow. 'Wulfstan's life of Saint Ethelwold: a translation with notes' *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 52 1982 pp 377-407
- Campbell, A. *Friðegodi Monachi Breuiloquium Vitae Beati Wilfredi et Wulfstani Cantoris Narratio Metrica de Sancto Swithuno*. Zürich, 1950, pp. 65-177
- Cross, J.E. 'Legimus in ecclesiasticis historiis : A sermon for All Saints and its use in Old English prose', *Traditio* 33, 1977, pp. 101-35
- Dolbeau, François. 'Le Breuiloquium de omnibus sanctis : un poème inconnu de Wulfstan, chantre de Winchester', *Analecta Bollandiana* 106, 1988, pp. 35-98
- Dronke, Peter, Michael Lapidge and Peter Stotz. 'Die unveröffentlichten Gedichte der Cambridger Liederhandschrift (CUL Gg.5.35)', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 17, 1982, pp. 54-95
- Fisher, D.J.V. 'The early biographers of St. Ethelwold', *English Historical Review* 67, 1952, pp. 381-91
- Gneuss, Helmut. *Hymnar und Hymnen im englischen Mittelalter*. Tübingen, 1968 (GR 6248)
- Gransden, Antonia. *Historical Writing in England c.550-c.1307*. Ithaca, NY, 1974
- Holschneider, A. *Die Organa von Winchester*. Hildesheim, 1968, pp.79-80
- Huber, M. S. *Swithunus: Miracula Metrica auctore Wulfstano monacho*, Beilage zum Jahresbericht des humanistischen Gymnasiums Metten, Metten, 1906
- Lapidge, Michael and Michael Winterbottom, eds. *Wulfstan of Winchester : The Life of St Æthelwold*, Oxford Medieval Texts, Oxford, 1991
- Lapidge, Michael. 'Æthelwold as Scholar and Teacher' in Yorke, 1988, pp. 89 -117
- Mabillon J. *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti* 9 vols Paris 1668-1701; 2nd ed. Venice, 1733-40.
- Planchart, A.E. *The Repertory of Tropes at Winchester*, 2 vols. Princeton, 1977
- Stubbs, William ed. *Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi de gestis regum Anglorum*. 2 vols. Rolls Series, London, 1887-89
- White, A. 'Boethius in the medieval quadrivium', *Boethius: His Life, Thought and Influence*, ed. M. Gibson, Oxford, 1981, pp. 162-205
- Whitelock, Dorothy. *English Historical Documents* I. 2nd ed. London, 1979 (EHD)

Winterbottom, Michael. *Three Lives of English Saints*. Toronto, 1972 (1972a)

Winterbottom, Michael. 'Three Lives of St. Ethelwold' *Medium Ævum* 41, 1972, pp. 191-201 (1972b)

Yorke, Barbara ed. *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*. Woodbridge, 1988.